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SEPT. 24, 1963—Secretary McNamara begins week-long South Vietnamese visit amid rising popular unrest with oppressive Diem rule. On return, he says 1,000 U. S. troops will be withdrawn quickly, nearly all by the end of 1965.

DEC. 19, 1963—Mr. McNamara takes a look at progress of war against Reds under new regime which overthrew Diem. "Now let's be real tough," he tells ruling generals. Back home he admits Viet Cong gains, but foresees future progress.

FEB. 24, 1964—A month after second Saigon coup, Administration announces another McNamara Viet Nam visit, this time in the face of stepped-up anti-U. S. terrorism and growing pressure to extend war into Red North Viet Nam.

Our Viet Nam Policy Shakeup

3-Way Effort To Influence War in Asia

By Tom Lambert
 Of The Herald Tribune Staff

WASHINGTON.

The Johnson administration announced yesterday the formation of a top-level inter-agency committee to concentrate exclusively on United States policies and operations in South Viet Nam's war against the Communists.

It also announced that Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara will fly to Viet Nam, probably within 10 days, to check on how the war is progressing. It will be his third trip to Saigon within six months.

The announcements were accompanied by Administration attempts to play down week-end reports that the

war might be expanded into North Viet Nam, and to quell any concern that Mr. McNamara's trip signifies a new crisis in the fight with the Communists.

The Secretary's projected visit to Viet Nam, a White House spokesman said, "does not indicate any new crisis or blow-up."

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But the two announcements underlined a mounting, frustration-born three-way effort in Washington to influence the course of the war. Some sources suggested the triple move might generate a new American policy in that conflict.

The three-way effort is psychological, organizational and personal, involving assignments of new key men to critical South Viet Nam policy and military posts.

President Johnson last week warned the North Viet Nam and Communist China that they were playing a "deeply dangerous game" in promot-

On the personal front, President Johnson has reportedly assigned a new man to head CIA operations in South Viet Nam. And it is understood that Army Lt. Gen. William Westmoreland,

recently assigned to South Viet Nam, will take over shortly from Gen. Paul Harkin, head of the American military mission there.

Despite President Johnson's warning last week and the reports about extending the war into the Communist North, Administration sources insisted yesterday there is no plan or policy at the moment to carry the conflict across the border.

ing subversion in South Viet Nam. That declaration was followed by reports from Saigon and Washington that the U. S. is thinking about carrying the war into North Viet Nam.

On the organizational front, the establishment of a new inter-agency committee marks a belated attempt to co-ordinate State Department, Pentagon, Central Intelligence Agency and other policies for South Viet Nam.

Secretary McNamara has discussed the possibility of such a move several times in the past when he was in Saigon, and reportedly will take up the issue again there next week. It is understood that Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge has queried Washington several times on the subject.

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Some of the new committee's members are expected to accompany Mr. McNamara to Saigon next week.

A somewhat comparable inter-agency committee was set up in July, 1961, when the Communists were scoring sizable gains in South Viet Nam's war. After committee was formed, American contributions of men and equipment were increased notably.

One concern in Washington was that reports of a possible push in the North might react against the U. S. abroad, especially if it did not follow through on them. And some sources insisted nothing would come of the reports, especially in an American election year.

Those sources said the new U. S. program is intended to generate more combat activity by the South Vietnamese Army, especially in the Communist-threatened Mekong Delta region. The army has not been particularly active since Maj. Gen. Nguyen Khanh's coup Jan. 29.

Communist successes in South Viet Nam have caused mounting frustration in Washington. President Johnson, who was not entirely familiar with the South Viet Nam situation when he took office, has been devoting much more time to it in the past few weeks.

The war in South Viet Nam may bog down somewhat around the end of May, when seasonal rains are expected. The rains impede large-scale operations by the army, but have been less troublesome for the guerrillas.

But official Washington sources deny that the U. S. has any policy or plans not to strike into North Viet Nam. Some unpublicized raids into the North in the past have been fiascos. Sources here say there will be no formal discussion of a counter-strike policy for North Viet Nam until Mr. McNamara returns from Saigon, and maybe not then.

The new inter-agency committee will be headed by the State Department's William H. Sullivan, former special assistant to Under Secretary for Political Affairs Averell Harriman. It will include representatives from the CIA, V.S. Information Agency and other agencies, and William Bundy, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs.

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